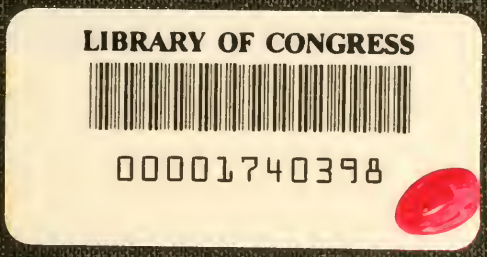
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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS

FOR PROMOTING THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,

AND

Improving the Condition of the Free People of Color.

FOR THE YEAR 1846.

PHILADELPHIA.
Printer, 299 Market Street.
1846.

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REPORT.

In presenting a summary of our labors for the past year, we are sensible of the little we have accomplished; but for the encouragement of others we can state, that if, as we hope, this little has been blessed to those for whom it was intended, we know that it has been doubly blessed to us in its performance.

The meetings of the Association have all been regularly held, and, as heretofore, the subjects of Education, Free Produce, and collecting and disseminating information on the subject of Slavery were intrusted to Standing Committees on each.

The condition of the colored portion of our population has claimed much of our attention; and, as opportunity offered, we have endeavored to promote their advancement in morality and intelligence by public and private labor and an evening school; for the latter, considerable pecuniary outlay was necessary. This branch of our labors we continue to feel an important one, being aware that much misapprehension exists in relation to the real condition of the free people of color. Statistics of pauperism and crime, as made up from our alms houses and prisons, should not be received without due examination. Much the larger portion of the white inmates of these places comes from the class who are, from their relations to general society, most exposed to adverse circumstances, being generally known as the laboring class; and as our colored friends almost wholly belong to this,

we should, in making statistic comparisons, not judge them as is commonly done, in reference to the whole white population, but only in regard to those with whom they fairly come in competition, whose means of living like their own are precarious, and who are subjected to difficulties and temptations from which the others are exempt. Comparisons thus drawn, give an aspect to their condition very different from that which is ordinarily assumed, and is consistent with what we might expect from extended personal intercourse with them. It has long since been ascertained that in this country they not only pay taxes sufficient to support their own poor, but actually assist in supporting the poor whites. Through all their difficulties many of them have attained a high standard of intelligence—and in their domestic relations exhibit a refinement which would be creditable to the most favored of our own color. We are the more willing to be explicit on this subject, from the belief that some have had their sympathies checked and their interest in the progress of Emancipation diminished by admitting the preposterous assertion, that the free colored people are little if any better off than the slaves.

Amongst the encouraging circumstances connected with our testimony against Slavery, is the increasing desire to avoid the contamination of its fruits, and the extended facilities for procuring goods free from such contamination. Large quantities of cotton, the produce of free labor, of a quality much superior to that formerly had, has, we are informed, been received in this city, and will be speedily manufactured. Some of the manufacturers in England, we are told, contemplate manufacturing free goods. Recent advices state, that sugar to almost any amount may now be obtained from China, and that the difficulties of raising cotton in India have been overcome. The disposition to avoid the

produce of slave labor which seems to be extending over the world, must contribute to the general feeling against Slavery.

Collecting and disseminating information on the subject of Slavery has occupied a large share of our attention. The Committee set apart for this purpose have made monthly reports to the Association of events that have transpired bearing upon the testimony, and the remarks and concerns growing out of these have added much to the interest of our meetings. A remonstrance against the admission of Texas, as a Slave State, was forwarded to Congress by direction of the Association; and petitions to our State Legislature, on behalf of the colored people, were printed and circulated amongst our citizens. The readiness with which signatures were obtained to these, and their favorable reception by the Legislature were encouraging. Several publications which were believed calculated to promote an interest in the concern, have been re-published and extensively distributed.

In taking a retrospect of the past year, there are many indications of an increasing interest in the subject of Slavery. So closely has the system become interwoven with our religious, social, and civil relations, that scarcely a public body of importance assembles in which its consideration does not claim attention. Throughout the Northern States legislative deliberations and enactments show an increasing disposition to regard the rights of the coloured people; and in some of them, a desire to be absolved from all participation in the Slave System.

In some of the Northern States laws have been passed forbidding the interference of their State officers, (as such,) and the use of their prisons, for the apprehension and security of fugitive slaves. In Pennsylvania, a bill of similar import has been reported by a special committee.

Political papers which, from their very nature, float on the tide of popular opinion, give evidence that this popular opinion is demanding more and more information in reference to Slavery. Even in the South, we find an earnest discussion going on through the public press. Cassius M. Clay, formerly a large slave-holder, after emancipating his own slaves, has given himself and his extended means earnestly to the task of inducing others to follow his example. The "Baltimore Saturday Visiter," a paper of wide circulation, has taken strong ground; and other journals still further south, have opened their columns to essays on this subject.

It is evident that persons interested in Slavery are giving increased attention to the great experiment instituted in the British West Indies; and notwithstanding the efforts made by interested parties to misrepresent the workings of Emancipation there, we have reason to believe that the truths of its happy results are beginning to force themselves on the convictions of our southern planters.

The arrival of the slaver Pons at our wharves from the coast of Africa, bringing the revolting details of her iniquitous cruise, and the shocking inhumanity and suffering growing out of it, has created a deep feeling in our community. The circumstance of her having been built and fitted out by our own citizens, and the suspicion that her destination at the time was known and approved by some, has brought the question of Slavery home to many minds. This obvious participation in some of the worst features of the odious system, gives a conclusive denial to the assurance that we of the north have nothing to do with Slavery.

The African Slave Trade had almost been lost sight of as an object of interest here; but the knowledge that no fewer than three vessels fitted out from our ports have recently been captured by one American cruiser, and

the startling announcement made in the National Intelligencer, of Washington, that in about eleven months upwards of one hundred slave ships have been captured on the coast of Africa, has again brought the subject before us with solemn claims on our attention. If such a large number are captured, a still greater must be engaged in the traffic. We may picture to ourselves the awful mental and bodily sufferings of the poor victims, as their homes are given to the torch—their friends to the sword, and they are themselves dragged to a doom the most terrible that their imaginations can conceive: and we may have some conception of the debasing influences accruing to the actors in these horrible tragedies—but a full knowledge of all, few will be able to realize.

As we contemplate this picture, and our hearts revolt at its enormities, do we remember that its counterpart exists amongst us? that a domestic slave trade, sanctioned by our government, participated in by our citizens, facilitated by our prisons, and whose head quarters is our national capitol, is actively carried on in our midst? And as a peculiarity, stamping it with features almost beyond belief, that this domestic slave trade, with its abundant inducements to evil—its cruelties and deprivations—its heart rendings, and its violations of the most sacred sympathies of our natures, owes its continuance to the fact that a large number of professing christians are engaged in rearing men and women for the southern shambles, as brute beasts are reared; and that in many instances the subjects furnished are known to be the children of those who thus consign them to the rice swamps, the sugar plantations, and the cotton fields.

In giving such revolting details, it is not our aim to arouse feelings of indignation or sympathy merely; these we are aware may be misdirected and misapplied—but that each one of us, remembering the relations we bear

as consumers of the fruits, and upholders of laws that support the system, and as common brethren to those engaged in it, may seek to know our own duties and endeavour to carry them out with fidelity.

That those more immediately implicated in this trade are not entirely insensible of its character, the following extracts will show:

The New Orleans Courier of February 15, 1845, says: "We think it would require *some casuistry* to show that the present slave-trade from Virginia is a whit better than the one from Africa."

Professor Andrews, of North Carolina, says: "I asked a slave-dealer if he *often* bought the wife without the husband? Oh, yes, *often*, and *frequently* too, they sell me the *mother*, while they *keep* her children. I have *often* known them to take away *the infant from its mother's breast, and keep it while they sold her.*" An advertisement in the Georgia Journal, January 2, 1838, describing the property of Gabriel Gunn, to be sold, mentions one child named James, about eight months old.

Niles' (Baltimore) Register, vol. 35, p. 4, says: "Dealing in slaves has become a large business—establishments are made in several places in Maryland and Virginia, at which *they are sold like cattle*. These places of deposit are strongly built, and well supplied with thumb-screws and gags, and ornamented with cow-skins and other whips, *oftentimes bloody*."

"Of the extent of this trade," says a writer in the New Jersey State Gazette, "few of us have any just conception. Between the years 1817 and 1837, a period of twenty years, 300,000 slaves were taken from Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland, to the Southern market, agreeably to the statement of the Rev. Dr. Gra-

ham, of North Carolina; and in 1835, it was estimated by the most intelligent men in Virginia, that 120,000 slaves were exported from that State during the preceding twelve months. About two-thirds of these accompanied their owners, who removed; the remaining one-third were sold at an average of $600 each, amounting to $24,000,000, which the domestic slave-trade poured into Virginia in one year. 'In 1836,' says the Maryville (Tennessee) Intelligencer, '60,000 slaves passed through a little western town on their way to the Southern market, and in the same year four States imported 200,000 slaves from the North.' In 1837, a committee appointed by the citizens of Mobile (Alabama) to inquire into the causes of pecuniary distress so prevalent, reported, that between 1833 and 1837, Alabama alone imported from the Northern Slave States $10,000,000 worth of slaves annually, amounting to forty millions in four years."

The Government of Denmark is making progress towards Emancipation in her colonies.

France is seriously contemplating the Abolition of Slavery in her colonial dominions; and the Bey of Tunis has actually put an end to the system throughout his dominions, stating it to be the result of a conviction which had long impressed his mind.

In looking at the objects of our Association, we are sensible of occupying a responsible position, and earnestly desire to maintain it in a manner consistent with our christian profession.

We regret that feelings of distrust and a want of charity should exist amongst Friends in reference to their testimony against Slavery—and we indulge the hope. that a disposition may prevail to search out the causes of difficulty where they exist, and have them tested by the plumb-line of Truth.

For ourselves, while claiming the privileges of exhortation and remonstrance, in brotherly love, with our fellow members, let us be willing to concede the same to them,—and in all our efforts to carry out our convictions, strive to give evidence that we have the peaceable spirit and wisdom of Jesus. Let us then go forward with hope, bearing with each other's infirmities, and remembering our own weaknesses,—endeavour to encourage to love and good works.

We have much to remind us of the importance of fidelity to manifested duty, and the uncertainty of our tenure upon life. One after another of our little company has been called from works to rewards since our last annual meeting—and of those set apart to embody this report, one of the most steadfast* has been stricken down almost while thus engaged; and while finishing the labor he assisted in commencing, the hearts of his survivors are overflowing with sorrow for his loss. But he has left behind him a rich legacy of love—an example that should cheer and animate us in the path of duty, and incite us to emulate his firmness and devotion in acting out our convictions of right.

On behalf of the Association,

JACOB M. ELLIS,
LYDIA GILLINGHAM,

Philada., 5th mo., 1846. *Clerks.*

* Daniel Neall.

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